SVEC Annual Meeting Highlights

The Cooperative’s 81st Annual Meeting was held on June 8 at the James Madison University Convocation Center. More than 1,200 members and guests attended the meeting. The meeting is held every year for member-owners to elect their board of directors and learn about the year’s Co-op business.

Member-owners received a reusable cloth gift bag upon registration at the meeting, which contained an Annual Report; a pen; a coupon for a discounted LED; and an “Energy Savers” guide to energy efficiency. Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative (SVEC) celebrated children at the meeting with a Kids Zone; and also had a high-voltage safety-demo trailer set up outside of the Convocation Center, where members could learn about power lines and the possible dangers they present.

The primary purpose of the Annual Meeting is the election of directors. One director position was decided at this year’s meeting. The Cooperative’s Bylaws require a minimum of two candidates for each position to be filled. Two individuals ran for the board position, including incumbent Larry C. Howdyshell. Howdyshell, representing Augusta and Highland counties, was re-elected to the board.

Following the election, reports were made by SVEC Board Chair Robbie F. Marchant and SVEC President and CEO Michael W. Hastings. Jackson E. Reasor, Old Dominion Electric Cooperative’s (ODEC) President and CEO, also spoke.

In her speech, Board Chair Marchant spoke about the effectiveness of member-owners working together to give their small part to better the Cooperative, and relayed a story regarding the history of how Co-ops got their start. She encouraged member-owners to share ways with fellow member-owners to get involved, including “liking” SVEC on Facebook, “following” the Co-op on Twitter, downloading the MySVEC app and visiting the web page, www.svec.coop.

Marchant also spoke about the teamwork of the Cooperative and shared a brief personal story about what the Cooperative means to her. She noted the importance of the safety aspect of SVEC and applauded the efforts in the last year — the Cooperative finished the year more than 1 million hours worked without a lost-time accident. In closing, she reiterated that SVEC staff will keep its focus on best serving the member-owners to provide safe, reliable, cost-effective electricity.

President and CEO Hastings, in his first Annual Meeting with SVEC, remarked that he’s been overwhelmed by the friendliness of the people of the Valley since he moved to the area from Illinois last year. Hastings joined SVEC after serving as president and CEO of Jo-Carroll Energy for 11 years.

Hastings offered an update to SVECs new Rockingham Complex, under construction at the corner of Oakwood Drive and Route 11 near Mount Crawford. The building, which will combine SVECs headquarters and Rockingham District office, is scheduled to be finished in the spring of 2018.

Hastings said SVEC is considering several options to incorporate solar panels at the new facility location. On a larger scale, he said the Co-op is also investigating the practicality of community solar projects around its service territory. These projects would provide an opportunity for member-owners who are unable to have ownership in solar power at home to still have an investment in solar generation, he said.

Hastings also shared information about SVECs rates. According to a March 2017 report from the Virginia Attorney General’s Office, SVEC has the lowest residential
rates per 1,000 kilowatt-hours among electric cooperatives regulated in the Commonwealth. To hold down power costs in the future, Hastings encouraged member-owners to sign up for Beat the Peak, a free program that notifies people when the demand for electricity is expected to be the highest.

Adding to Board Chair Marchant’s comments about safety, Hastings also praised SVEC employees for their work to avoid lost-time accidents. He noted that the Winchester and Rockingham offices have collectively worked 23 years without a lost-time injury.

In closing, Hastings said he felt blessed to work in such a beautiful area as the Shenandoah Valley.

The meeting ended with the drawing of door prizes. This year featured two grand prizes: two $500 gift certificates for electric service. Recipients of these two grand prizes were Cynthia S. Housden of Luray and Wayne and Wanda Cousins of Harrisonburg.

Anna M. Cline of Harrisonburg; John W. Dresely of Winchester; Dennis R. Clemmer of West Augusta; Verdie P. Huffman of Keezletown; and Johnnie T./Judy W. Bishop of Staunton were recipients of $200 gift certificates for electric service.

Mark A. Payne of Rockingham; David and Lynda Tarburton of Luray; Happy Brien Pettit of Luray; Carol H. Griffin of Luray; Dennis and Judy Landes of Fort Defiance; Wayne A. Fulk of Broadway; June M. Armentrout of Rockingham; Charles R. Jameson III of Weyers Cave; Nancy J. Deavers of Rockingham; and Cecil A. Byrd Jr. of Fishersville were recipients of $100 gift certificates for electric service.

Stanley and Carole Thompson of Raphine were the recipients of the early-bird proxy prize.

If you are interested in viewing this year’s Annual Meeting, a video is posted online at www.svec.coop. WVPT, the area’s PBS affiliate in Harrisonburg, provided a live stream of the business portion of the event and the archived footage is now available.

Below: WVPT, the area’s PBS affiliate in Harrisonburg, provided a live stream of the business portion of the event and the archived footage is now available at www.svec.coop. Bottom and right: The Cooperative’s 81st Annual Meeting was held on June 8 at the James Madison University Convocation Center. More than 1,200 members and guests attended the meeting and enjoyed a barbecue dinner beforehand. SVEC Board Chair Robbie F. Marchant and SVEC President and CEO Michael W. Hastings gave reports following the director election.
“Help hold down electricity rates by working with Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative to Beat the Peak.”
— Jason Burch
Manager of System Engineering

Beat the Peak is a new, free and completely voluntary program to help hold down electricity rates for all Cooperative members.

During periods of the very highest electricity usage across the Cooperative, participants will receive an alert by their choice of text message, email and/or phone asking them to try and reduce their electricity usage for the next few hours. These alerts will typically only occur on the very hottest or coldest days of the year.

By working together to decrease the amount of electricity used during these peak periods, the Cooperative has to buy less electricity at the most expensive times. That will help hold down everyone’s rate.

To find out more about Beat the Peak or to sign up, visit www.SVECBeatThePeak.coop

Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative
A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer. SVEC supports our armed services and veterans in employment opportunities.
SVEC Awards Ten $1,000 Scholarships

For the 26th year, Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative (SVEC) was able to give back to the community by awarding 10 recipients of their annual scholarships in the amount of $1,000 each. The students attend seven of the high schools in the area that SVEC serves.

Peyton Ayers, Kennedy Eagle, Maria Becerra Flores, Sadie Garber, Zachary Hiter, Tara Ingersoll, Blair Landram, Tyler Patton, Duncan Schroeder and Allison Stump were chosen from a pool of 66 applications that SVEC received.

“Part of SVEC’s dedication to its communities is making an investment in the youth,” SVEC President and CEO Michael W. Hastings said. “With these scholarships, we hope to reduce the burden on students looking to further their education and, in turn, help the community.”

To be considered for the SVEC scholarship, the student’s parent or guardian needs to be a member-owner of the Cooperative.

A five-person scholarship committee reviewed the students’ essays, letters of recommendation, participation in school and community activities, high school classes attended and the grade-point average earned. The scholarship committee consisted of Nancy Bauserman, a retired educator; Kyle O’Brien, Broadway town manager; Tamara Hatch, associate director of sponsored programs, administration and accounting at James Madison University; Doug Rinker, president and CEO of Winchester Equipment Company; and Susan Vass, a retired educator from Augusta County schools.

Since 1992, SVEC has awarded scholarships to deserving high school seniors in the region that it serves. These students have earned the scholarships with excellence in the classroom, extracurricular activities and contributions to the community. In the years since the scholarship has been awarded, the Cooperative has given back more than $100,000 to the community.

Meet the 10 students who received $1,000 SVEC scholarships for 2017:

**Peyton Ayers**, the daughter of Heather and Tracy Ayers in Stuarts Draft, attended Stuarts Draft High School. She is interested in studying art history at Barnard College, an affiliate of Columbia University in New York. Peyton was a member of the National Honor Society and National Art Honor Society, and has been recognized as the Best Art History Student at the Shenandoah Valley Regional Governor’s School. She was president of her class at Stuarts Draft and co-president of the governor’s school’s international exchange program. In the community, she volunteers at the McGuffey Art Center, Corkscrew Racing and Augusta County Library. In her essay to the scholarship committee, Peyton says her time away from the Shenandoah Valley will be brief, as she expects to return home from college.

“I plan to use my knowledge of and ardor for art to improve the arts culture of the Shenandoah Valley. I would love nothing more than to open an art studio, center or gallery in the community at some point in my life. I strive to get involved in organizing more art festivals, exhibits and classes throughout the Valley in order to demonstrate the importance of art to the incredible people in this area.”

**Kennedy Eagle**, the daughter of Donna and Charles Eagle in Winchester, attended John Handley High School. Her desired field of study is pre-medicine when she attends the University of Virginia in the fall. Kennedy was the school board student body representative for Winchester Public Schools and served as president of the Handley Key Club, president of the Class of 2017 and vice president of the National Honor Society. She is a Jefferson Scholar nominee for full tuition at the University of Virginia, and has worked as an intern and page for Virginia legislators.

In her essay to the scholarship committee, Kennedy says she is excited to find out where her college education and experience will lead her.

“Of course I have ideas about what I want to do, but those are just ideas. I could fulfill my current dream of being a heart surgeon, but I could also end up studying language in Thailand, something I have not imagined doing until now. College is the most open-ended experience that I will ever embark on, an experience that is both terrifying and exciting. However, I know that in the end of four years I will be more myself than I ever have been. I will know my path and my purpose, whatever that may be.”

**Maria Becerra Flores**, the daughter of Pedro Becerra in Mount Jackson, attended Stonewall Jackson High School. She will attend James Madison University.

Maria was secretary of the National Honor Society, officer with the World Languages Club and volunteered for school activities, such as blood drives and Breakfast with Santa. In the community, she participates in the Adopt-a-Grandparent program at Life Care Center of New Market and helps at the St. John Bosco Church Outreach Store in Woodstock.

In her essay to the scholarship committee, Maria explains how she has become a thriving student despite coming to the United States in first grade without knowing a word of English.

“I want to show my Hispanic peers ‘que si se puede,’ which translates to ‘you can do it,’ with hard work and dedication. This is the impact I hope I leave on my high school and peers.”

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Sadie Garber, the daughter of Jonathan and Pennie Garber in Verona, attended Fort Defiance High School. Her desired field of study is computer science when she attends Johns Hopkins University.

Sadie was a member of the advance chorus, marching band and National Honor Society, and served as secretary and editor for the Literacy Club. In the community, she is active in her church adult and handbell choirs, as well as youth group.

In her essay to the scholarship committee, Sadie says she is excited at the opportunity of being a part of “cutting edge” research projects ongoing at Johns Hopkins.

“Computers touch our lives a thousand times in a day, from the computer chip which runs the timer in your oven to the onboard GPS in your car. With a world-class, research-focused education in computer science, I can help develop the next generation of these devices. I can streamline their software or make their ‘brains’ more powerful, and by doing so, I can directly benefit the members of my community.”

Zachary Hiter, the son of James Hiter and Renee Hertzler, attended Broadway High School. He plans to pursue a business degree from the University of Virginia.

Zachary was vice president of the National Honor Society, president of a leadership club called Aces and a member of the Student Council Association and swim, competition cheer and soccer teams. In the community, he is a volunteer swim coach and assists with events, including Farm to School Day.

In his essay to the scholarship committee, Zachary says his pursuit of a business degree is not driven by a desire to earn the most money.

“I find it pointless to work and live only for myself when there are over seven billion other people whom I can positively impact. The main driving force behind my desire to learn about marketing/consulting is to be able to help others. Personally, I thrive off of seeing others succeed, especially when I have played an integral role in leading them toward their personal success.”

Tara Ingersoll, the daughter of Hunter and Tanya Ingersoll, attended Wilson Memorial High School. She is interested in studying animal and poultry science once enrolled at Virginia Tech.

Tara was a member of the National Honor Society, Music Honor Society and Spanish Club, and runs track. In the community, she is active at her church (including taking a mission trip to New York for hurricane relief), has participated in the annual Turkey Drive on Thanksgiving and helps teach gifted and talented elementary school students.

In her essay to the scholarship committee, Tara says her lifelong dream has been to become a veterinarian, and she plans to work at home and on campus to achieve the necessary skills.

“I know I will do well no matter the obstacles that are thrown my way. Receiving a college education at Virginia Tech is going to be the perfect place for me to achieve my goals. ... I want to expand my knowledge of animals and their needs through any means necessary while meeting new people.”

Blair Landram, the daughter of Kelly and Kenneth Landram, attended Fort Defiance High School. She will attend Blue Ridge Community College in the fall and is interested in earning a master’s of science degree as a physician assistant at Mary Baldwin University.

Blair was a member of the National Honor Society, Key Club, Family Career and Community Leaders of America and played soccer. In the community, she delivers meals on Thanksgiving, works at Valley Mission in Staunton and creates cards for nursing home residents.

In her essay to the scholarship committee, Blair said becoming a physician assistant appeals to her because she enjoys helping those in need, especially children diagnosed with cancer.

“Just knowing that every day I have the possibility to make a specific kid have a hopeful and bright future brings joy to me. However, I know that at times things will not always go the way I want it. At least with my goal in life I have the chance to make a positive difference in each adult’s or child’s life.”

Tyler Patton, the son of Debbie Patton in Mount Jackson, attended Stonewall Jackson High School. He plans to pursue a degree in human biology at the College of William & Mary.

Tyler was a captain on the football team and member of the National Honor Society, World Languages Club, Interact Club and Student Council Association. In the community, he volunteers at Mt. Hermon Church, the Conicville Volunteer Fire Department and Shenandoah County Animal Shelter.

In his essay to the scholarship committee, Tyler writes that childhood lessons learned from his late grandmother, and honoring her memory, motivate him to succeed.

“The most important memory I can remember of my grandmother is her persistent reinforcement of the importance of attending college. She recognized the intellectual ability that I portrayed from a young age and constantly encouraged me to further my education after high school. Attending college would certainly be a milestone in my life, especially considering that I would be the first in my family to do so. My passion for education was first sparked by my grandmother and that fire still grows inside of me today.”

Duncan Schroeder, the son of Andy and Lisa Schroeder of Quicksburg, attended Stonewall Jackson High School. He plans to pursue a degree in business management when he attends the University of Virginia, and then study law as a post graduate.
Duncan was a member of the debate team, chess club, Student Council Association and captain on the football and baseball teams. In the community, he volunteers by Christmas caroling and playing bingo at a nursing home, helps organize packages for those in need and supports the Christmas Jar, where a local family receives an anonymous financial donation at Christmas.

In his essay to the scholarship committee, Duncan writes of his goal of opening his own law practice in the Shenandoah Valley.

“I want to work in the place I love. I want to help the people I love. I want to help the people of the Shenandoah Valley as a lawyer. … When I come home from college and set up my law practice, I will have an appreciation and a willingness to work with people who might be very different than me.”

Allison Stump, the daughter of Norman and Becky Stump in Monterey, attended Highland High School. Her desired field of study is biology, or human biology, when she attends the University of Virginia in the fall.

Allison was a captain on the Highland girls’ volleyball and basketball teams, an officer for the local FFA chapter, secretary of the National Honor Society and 4-H camp counselor.

In her essay to the scholarship committee, Allison writes of her desire to return from college to serve Highland County.

“I could help my community to grow medically. We don’t have many things, we don’t even have an ER. … If I could help my community to grow even further, whether with the information I bring forth or not, I would consider this a huge accomplishment for both me and my community.”

SVEC recognized its scholarship recipients at a banquet held May 25 at Bridgewater Retirement Community. President and CEO Michael W. Hastings (right) and Board Chair Robbie F. Marchant are pictured with nine of the 10 winners. Duncan Schroeder was unable to attend. Top row (left to right): Peyton Ayers, Sadie Garber, Zachary Hiter, Tyler Patton, Maria Becerra Flores. Bottom row (left to right): Allison Stump, Tara Ingersoll, Blair Landram, Kennedy Eagle.
SVEC Stopping Field Collection Practice

Effective Sept. 1, Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative will discontinue the practice of collecting member-owners’ past-due payments at the service location.

SVEC has traditionally sent personnel to homes and businesses to collect money and an associated $50 collection fee if an account is subject to disconnection for nonpayment. After careful consideration of the value of this practice to SVEC and our member-owners, the Cooperative determined that field collecting will stop.

While stopping field collections will require an adjustment to some member-owners’ schedules, SVEC still offers several ways to pay bills and avoid the cutting of electric service. These options are:

- **By mail**, using the remittance envelope provided with your bill statement.
- **Eazy Pay.** This free service allows member-owners to automatically deduct from your bank account.
- **In person** at any district office, open 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, or a drive-through window in the Staunton and Winchester offices.
- **Through the night deposit box** at any district office location.
- **By credit or debit card**, via telephone at 1-800-234-7832, or online at www.svec-online.coop. A $3.25 convenience fee is charged by SVEC’s payment processor.
- **MySVEC app.** A $3.25 convenience fee is also charged here.
- **MoneyGram.** Payments are accepted at any Walmart, CVS and Farm Fresh. The cost to the member-owner is $2.50 at Walmart and $2.95 everywhere else.
- **Western Union.** Payment may be made in the form of cash, check or money order. The cost to the member-owner is $1.50.

Please note that payments made at any location other than an SVEC office may be delayed up to five days.

According to SVECs Terms and Conditions for Providing Electric Service (Section IX, Part B), any service disconnected for nonpayment “shall not be reconnected until full payment is received for:

a. All obligations to date;

b. A Reconnection Charge and/or applicable fees; and

c. Any required deposits.”

Further, settlement of charges and fees received before 4 p.m. Monday through Friday will entitle a disconnected member-owner to be reconnected on that day for a regular work hour’s reconnection charge of $50 per trip per account. If a member-owner requires that service be reconnected at a time other than regular working hours, an after-hours reconnection charge of $85 per trip per account will be assessed.

Thank you for your understanding as we work to better serve our member-owners.

**Download Our Free Mobile App, MySVEC**

Take your participation as a member-owner of Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative to a new level by downloading our free mobile app, MySVEC.

Pay your bill, report a power outage and receive outage-related notifications through this fast, user-friendly program.

Features enable you to:

- Manage and make timely, secure payments;
- Report an outage;
- Receive up-to-date outage-restoration information;
- View the area’s outage map; and
- Contact SVEC by phone or email.

This app is designed to provide an additional convenience for you, our member-owner, and serve as another way in which you can be connected to your electric cooperative. It builds on existing resources such as our website (www.svec.coop) and our social media channels, including Facebook and Twitter.

During extreme weather or emergency situations, this app also offers another way to contact us and monitor the area’s outage map. Remember, you are more than a customer of Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative ... you are a member-owner. Take advantage of everything the Cooperative has to offer by downloading this app. We will continually evaluate your needs, work to exceed your expectations and pursue opportunities that will benefit you.

To download the app, visit stores for Android and Apple devices, or find the links under the “MySVEC App” page on www.svec.coop.

**SVEC Major April Outages**

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<th>Hours</th>
<th>Cause</th>
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<td>April 6</td>
<td>Stanley area</td>
<td>3,700 members</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>Unknown cause</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 6</td>
<td>Linville area</td>
<td>2,900 members</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>Bird in substation</td>
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<td>April 25</td>
<td>Stanley area</td>
<td>2,000 members</td>
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Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative
A rea Students Earn Electric Co-op Scholarships

Seven high school seniors whose families are served by Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative (SVEC) have each earned $1,000 college scholarships awarded by the Education Foundation of the Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives (VMDAEC). The 2017 recipients are:

- **Gannon McNamara** from John Handley High School and the son of Christine McNamara of Winchester.
- **Cody Hasler** from Broadway High School and the son of Timothy Hasler of Rockingham.
- **Kayley Campbell** from Stuarts Draft High School and the daughter of Jennifer Campbell of Stuarts Draft.
- **Sadie Garber** from Fort Defiance High School. She is the daughter of Jonathan and Pennie Garber of Verona.
- **Michael De La Cruz** from Turner Ashby High School and the son of Xiomara Santos of Harrisonburg.
- **Laurn Shirkey** from Broadway High School and the daughter of Kevin Shirkey of Singers Glen.
- **Emma Casto** from Riverheads High School and the daughter of Robert and Christina Casto of Staunton.

These students were eligible for consideration because their parents are member-owners of Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative. This year, the VMDAEC Education Scholarship Foundation awarded 50 $1,000 Worth Hudson scholarships to students who live in areas served by electric cooperatives in Delaware, Maryland and Virginia.

These grants can be used to pay for tuition, fees and books. Since its inception in 2000, the Foundation has awarded 627 scholarships totaling $526,500.